

# Engaging Legal Education: Moving Beyond the Status Quo



Law School Survey of Student Engagement  
2006 Annual Survey Results

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The Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) documents dimensions of quality in legal education and provides information about law student participation in effective educational activities that law schools and other organizations can use to improve student learning.

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## Foreword

### LSSSE Results: A Spur to Action

I am delighted to introduce the third annual report of the Law School Survey of Student Engagement. LSSSE was built on a solid foundation of research about what practices lead to student learning, research that had been explored since 1999 by its companion survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement. While in the past three years, more than 64,000 law students at 111 different law schools have responded to LSSSE, nearly 260,000 undergraduates at 523 four-year degree institutions responded to NSSE in the last year alone. Many of those institutions have made NSSE a central part of their approach to determining the quality of their students' education.


- In time spent preparing for class, law students in their first and second years clearly surpassed undergraduates. While undergraduates routinely report spending 13-14 hours each week on class preparation, first year students spent an average of 21 hours each week preparing for class; second year students spent about 18 hours. By the third year of law school, however, students had returned to their undergraduate average of 13 hours each week.
- Only 5% of college seniors report never receiving prompt feedback from faculty, as compared to 16% of first-year and 24% of second-year law students. As the body of the report illustrates, prompt feedback is associated with most positive educational outcomes, including critical thinking, effective learning, and clear writing.

### LSSSE was built on a solid foundation of research about what practices lead to student learning.

Both surveys are premised on a simple but powerful observation, validated by decades of research: students who are most frequently engaged in educationally effective practices—studying, participating in class, discussing materials with peers, and receiving feedback from faculty, for example—learn more and are more satisfied than those who are less frequently engaged in such practices. And as George Kuh, NSSE's chief architect, has persuasively suggested, engagement is more than a path to good educational outcomes; it is a path “to the habits of heart and mind that promise to stand [students] in good stead for a life-time of continuous learning.”<sup>1</sup>

Law schools provide intensive graduate and professional education, and one would assume that law students would rate their experiences quite differently than undergraduates. How do law students compare to undergraduates on some key measures of engagement?

- Across the board, law students were less likely than undergraduate seniors to talk to faculty members about ideas from readings or class outside of class.
- Only first-year students were more likely than undergraduates to talk to faculty members about their career plans. Law students were no more likely than undergraduates to work with faculty members on activities other than coursework, such as committees.
- First and second year students were significantly more likely than undergraduates to report that they very often had conversations with other students who were very different from them in terms of religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values, and significantly more likely to have had serious conversations with students of a different racial or ethnic background than their own. Third-year students were no more likely than undergraduates to have had such conversations.



These comparisons suggest two observations. First, we need to focus on the quality of our students' third-year experience. LSSSE results confirm the findings of Gulati, Sanders and Sobieski, who have demonstrated that third year law students are disengaged, prepared to spend a year coasting before taking on the stress and long hours of law practice.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the authors of that study were struck by the depth of the disengagement, which included minimal

Second, we need to recommit to our own engagement with our students. The LSSSE results concerning interaction between students and faculty are disappointing for graduate and professional education. We are our students' best models and mentors, and this year's LSSSE report details the benefits of student-faculty interaction: more and better class preparation, harder work generally, and greater educational gains.

**LSSSE provides an invaluable window into the learning-related activities of law students. It opens a door for all law faculty interested in improving their teaching and their institution's support for learning by demonstrating what we are doing well, and what we are failing to do.**

or nonexistent class preparation, minimal class attendance, and minimal participation. While Gulati et al. found students satisfied with this state of affairs, we should not be accomplices in this "happy charade." Rather, law schools should focus on this critical year before practice, using seminars, capstone experiences, and clinics to push students to deeper substantive knowledge and deeper engagement in the profession.

LSSSE provides an invaluable window into the learning-related activities of law students. It also opens a door for all law faculty interested in improving their teaching and their institution's support for learning by demonstrating what we are doing well, and what we are failing to do. I hope that this year's LSSSE results are a spur to action – and deeper engagement – by both our students and ourselves.

**Lauren Robel**


Dean and Val Nolan Professor of Law

Indiana University School of Law – Bloomington

<sup>1</sup>*Engaged Learning: Fostering Success for All Students*, National Survey of Student Engagement Annual Report 2006, Director's Message.

<sup>2</sup>Mitu Gulati, Richard Sander & Robert Sockloskie, *The Happy Charade: An Empirical Examination of the Third Year of Law School*, 51 J. LEGAL EDUC. 235 (2001).





## Director's Message

Assessment, transparency, and accountability. These three words echoed throughout the report by the National Commission on the Future of Higher Education released in September 2006. The institutional behaviors suggested by these words signal a substantial shift in what the public expects from colleges and universities. Although this group, appointed by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, focused primarily on undergraduate education, its concerns and challenges also apply to law schools and the quality of legal education. For example:

- What is the evidence that law students are well prepared to meet the demands of the practice of law?
- Do some law schools provide their students a superior education compared with others? And what is the basis for such claims?
- Are some students better prepared to work effectively with diverse peers, an increasingly valuable set of skills and competencies in a multicultural society?
- Do some law schools provide more support than others in terms of helping their students academically and socially?
- Where can prospective students find answers to these and other questions that accurately reflect the quality of legal education?

These are the kinds of questions the National Commission on the Future of Higher Education want baccalaureate-granting institutions to be able to answer. How long will it be before law schools will face similar scrutiny? Soon, according to the authors of *Best Practices in Legal Education*,<sup>1</sup> who quote from Greg Munro's work, OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT FOR LAW SCHOOLS.<sup>2</sup>

The assessment movement is knocking at the door of American legal education. Legal education in the United States is renowned for its adherence to traditional case books, Socratic teaching method, single end-of-the-semester final exams, and an unwillingness to change. Now, regional accrediting

bodies, acting under the aegis of the U.S. Department of Education, are demanding that law schools, as units of accredited colleges and universities, state their missions and outcomes, explain how their curricula are designed to achieve those outcomes, and identify their methods for assessing student performance and institutional outcomes.

Four years ago the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) project was launched in an effort to systematically collect information about the law school experience as perceived by students. Its mission is to provide data about student experiences related to desired learning outcomes that schools could use to compare their performance with that of comparable institutions and identify areas where improvement is needed. Toward these ends, LSSSE was established as an independent third party assessment program under the auspices of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research where the widely used National Survey of Student Engagement is based. The annual law student survey is entirely supported by user fees. With more than 100 different law schools having participated in its short history, LSSSE clearly is providing something the legal education community needs and wants.

LSSSE aspires to be the premiere source of accurate, reliable information about the quality of the law school student experience. To achieve this goal, LSSSE data must be of indisputably high quality and *used* both by participating schools to improve legal education and contribute to the research base that informs teaching and learning in law schools. Later in this report, several examples are provided of the former – how schools are using their results to enhance the student experience. In order to realize the latter objective – adding value to the legal education literature – we are intentionally moving LSSSE closer to the law school community. The rationale for doing so is straightforward. LSSSE will be more important to legal education if those who conduct research in this area can connect the information with other data bases and ongoing research efforts designed to discover and enhance teaching and learning in the law school context.





From the beginning, LSSSE was buoyed by the endorsement of the Association of American Law Schools. Through the good offices of the AALS Research Committee, we want to make it possible for researchers to draw on LSSSE data to help answer questions about legal education that will move the field forward and to develop responsible ways to answer what will almost certainly become more persistent calls for more assessment, transparency, and accountability. The first step in this direction was to invite three faculty associates from the Indiana University-Bloomington Law School to begin to work with the data. As with the other national surveys housed at the IU Center for Postsecondary Research, several conditions guide this collaboration. Among the most important is that the agreement with participating law schools will not be compromised. That is, as with LSSSE staff, others who have access to the data must not identify any results with individual law schools without the explicit permission of the school. There will undoubtedly be situations where naming law schools will be in the best interests of the profession, such as describing innovative programs and engaging policies and practices at high performing institutions from which others can learn much. We look forward to working with AALS and others who share values and goals congenial to LSSSE's mission and philosophy.

To provide leadership for LSSSE in this rapidly changing, challenging legal education environment, I am pleased to introduce Ms. Lindsay Watkins as the new project manager. Lindsay is exceptionally well qualified for this role, having earned the J.D. *cum laude* from Indiana Law-Bloomington where she held a Public Interest Law Fellowship and was a Dean's Scholar. Following law school Lindsay worked for

a year as an associate attorney at a firm in Indianapolis. Lindsay succeeded Patrick O'Day who superbly shepherded LSSSE from an idea into a national tool that has great promise to improve the quality of the law school student experience and legal education. We shall always be in his debt.

Now I invite you to review the major results from the 2006 survey. As you will see, it was another record year in terms of the numbers of participating law schools and law school student respondents. The title of this year's report, *Engaging Legal Education: Moving Beyond the Status Quo*, declares that it is time to ask some hard questions about what law school students experience and whether different approaches to teaching and learning would better prepare students for what they will face after law school. For example, do students get enough feedback to enhance their learning and performance? Do they have enough experiences with diverse peers to work effectively with others? Are enough opportunities available to apply what they are learning to real-life situations? The findings from LSSSE 2006 help answer these and some other questions that suggest areas where the quality of legal education could be improved.

As always, we welcome your comments about this report and suggestions for ways LSSSE can contribute to the national conversation about improving the quality of legal education and how we might work with others toward this end.

**George D. Kuh**


Chancellor's Professor and Director

Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research

<sup>1</sup>Clinical Legal Education Association, *Best Practices for Legal Education* (forthcoming), draft available at <http://professionalism.law.sc.edu> (last visited October 17, 2006).

<sup>2</sup>GREGORY S. MUNRO, OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT FOR LAW SCHOOLS (Institute for Law School Teaching 2000).





## Why is Engagement Important?

Law schools have a special obligation to society. In addition to preparing students to practice law, they are expected to inculcate an appreciation and commitment to adhering to the highest ethical principles in the service of the greater good. To achieve these essential goals, law schools need to create the conditions whereby students acquire the requisite knowledge, skills, competencies and sensibilities. A substantial body of research indicates that learners of all ages and backgrounds are more likely to optimally benefit if they engage in educationally purposeful activities.

By the very act of being engaged, students develop habits of the mind and heart that promise to stand them in good stead for a lifetime of continuous learning. Lee Shulman is the president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which co-sponsors the LSSSE project. In his article, “Making Differences: A Table of Learning,” Shulman observed that “learning begins with student engagement, which in turn leads to knowledge and understanding...” Moreover, he suggested engagement can be “a proxy for learning, understanding, and postgraduation commitments that we cannot measure very well directly, or that we would have to wait 20 years to measure.” Shulman ultimately concluded that “engagement is not solely a proxy; it can also be an end itself...a fundamental purpose of education.”

Because law students are typically well prepared academically, highly motivated, and make a substantial financial investment to attend law school, we might assume that law students will be highly engaged across all dimensions of their law school experience. LSSSE data show this is not necessarily true. In part, this is because many law school faculty members use traditional teaching methods instead of

a blend of research-based learner-centered practices. For example, prompt feedback is one hallmark of effective learning. To assess progress, to evaluate study methods, to remain focused and enthused, students need feedback. Many law classes offer concrete feedback only after the course has ended in the form of final exam grades. Indeed, one in four 2Ls report never receiving prompt feedback from instructors. This is not enough.

To provide law schools with accurate, reliable information about the extent to which law students engage in effective learning practices, the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) was developed.

### *Engaging to Move Beyond the Status Quo*

LSSSE was born out of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a carefully developed, research-based assessment instrument that has been widely used in the U.S. and Canada.

As with NSSE, the results from LSSSE provide a window into whether teaching practices and the law school environment encourage students to take full advantage of the opportunities and resources law schools provide. With this information in hand, law schools can compare their performance with that of other institutions to identify strengths and areas where improvement would be desirable. Such steps may be as straightforward as administering practice exams during the semester to increase feedback to students, or as comprehensive as a systemic change in law school culture. In this way, LSSSE data can help move law schools beyond the status quo by improving teaching, learning, and the quality of legal education.

**“LSSSE provides a unique opportunity to explore systematically what is achieved – and what can be improved – in traditional and non-traditional areas of the curriculum.”**  
–Dean Bryant Garth, Southwestern University School of Law



## Quick LSSSE Facts

### Survey

Administered via the web to all students at participating law schools. Supported by institutional participation fees. Completion time is about 15 minutes.

### Objectives

Provide data to law schools to improve legal education, enhance student success, inform accreditation efforts, and facilitate benchmarking efforts.

### Partners

Cosponsored by the Association of American Law Schools and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

### Participating Law Schools

One hundred and eleven different law schools have participated in LSSSE since 2003.

### Respondents and Response Rates

In 2006, more than 24,000 law students responded to the LSSSE survey. Four out of five participating schools had response rates of 50% or higher. On average, 58% of students at any given school completed the survey.

### Audiences

Law school administrators and faculty, advisory boards, trustees, prospective students, institutional researchers, accreditors, higher education scholars, and college and university advisors.

### Data Sources

JD/LLB students from participating law schools across the United States and Canada. Supplemental information comes from the American Bar Association and the Law School Admission Council.

### Cost

Participation fees range from \$3000 to \$5000 as determined by student enrollment.

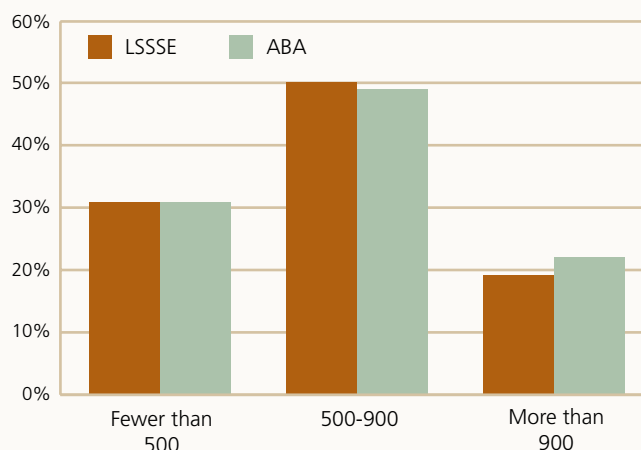
### Participation Agreement

Participating law schools agree that LSSSE will use the aggregated data for national reporting purposes and other legal education initiatives. Law schools may use their own data for institutional purposes. Results specific to a law school, and identified as such, will not be made public except by mutual agreement between the schools and LSSSE.

**Figure 1** Affiliation of LSSSE 2006 Law Schools compared with all ABA-Approved Schools



**Figure 2** Size of LSSSE 2006 Law Schools compared with all ABA-Approved Schools





## Selected Results

Since its inception in 2003, more than 64,000 law students at 111 different law schools have responded to the Law School Survey of Student Engagement. The questions focus on activities related to learning in the law school context. The results show how law students use their time, what they think about their experience, and what law schools can do to improve engagement and learning.

### Promising Findings

- Almost half (48%) of all respondents frequently (“often” or “very often”) contributed to class discussions or asked questions in class.

*Good discussion prompts students to use higher-level thinking skills: to apply rules, analyze issues, synthesize doctrines. (Hess, 1999).*

- Four in five students said that their coursework substantially emphasized (“quite a bit” or “very much”) applying theories or concepts to practical problems or new situations.

*Active learning techniques (e.g. applying concepts to real-world problems) are effective methods of teaching critical thinking and higher level cognitive skills. (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Through active learning techniques, students learn to construct, not simply receive knowledge. (Baxter Magolda, 1999).*

- More than half (51%) of law student respondents said they frequently worked harder than they thought they could to meet the expectations of a faculty member.

*The vast majority of students learn more when performance standards require a level of effort greater than what students would ordinarily put forth if left to their own devices. (Kuh et al., 2005).*

- Three in five students frequently had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity.

*Different backgrounds affect the way people see the world. These differences enrich learning, scholarship, public service, and institutional governance. The voices from diverse cultures bring to the classroom important and different perspectives. (AALS Good Practices).*

- Nearly 30% of all respondents frequently collaborated with other students outside of class to prepare assignments. More than four in five students (84%) collaborated with their peers to prepare assignments at least occasionally.

*Working with others often increases involvement in learning. (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).*

**Four out of five law students frequently apply theories and concepts to real world situations.**



- Nearly two in three students (65%) frequently talked about ideas or concepts from their courses with others outside of the classroom.

*Research confirms that cooperative and social learning increase involvement in learning. (Sorcinelli, 1991).*

- More than four in five law students said that their school strongly emphasized (“quite a bit” or “very much”) spending significant amounts of time on school and academic work.

*To help students succeed, an instructor should articulate clear expectations of student performance. (Scott & Tobe, 1995). Expecting students to perform well will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).*

- Over three quarters of the first-year students who participated in pro bono or volunteer work did so without receiving academic credit.

*Pro bono work can also open students’ eyes ... [These opportunities] can, if well planned, help the students learn the importance of high standards of performance. They can also affect the way that students perceive the substantive issues that they discuss in their courses. (Learning to Serve, AALS, 2006).*

## Disappointing Findings

- Nearly a third of 3L respondents (32%) reported that they had not done any pro bono or volunteer work during law school, and had no plans to do so.
- About 15% of 1Ls and one quarter (24%) of 2Ls *never* received prompt feedback from faculty members.
- Three quarters (77%) of 3Ls spent no time during the week on legal pro bono work not required for class.
- One in three 3Ls (31%) spent fewer than eleven hours per week reading and preparing for class.
- More than a third of all law students spent no time during the week participating in law-school sponsored organizations such as clubs, journal, committees, moot court, etc.
- One in four 1Ls (26%) *never* used job search assistance at their law school.
- Of those students at U.S. law schools who have incurred debt related to their legal education, 75% will owe more than \$60,000.
- More than two thirds (67%) of those students who wish to work for public interest organizations after law school will owe more than \$60,000 upon graduation.

About one in five students reports **never** receiving prompt feedback from professors.

## Selected Results (continued)

### Respondent Characteristics

In terms of gender, race and ethnicity, LSSSE respondents mirrored the characteristics of students enrolled at participating law schools and closely resembled the national profile of law students.

- Law student respondents were almost equally divided between women (52%) and men (48%).
- Thirteen percent of respondents attend law school part time.
- Joint degree students made up 4% of the respondent population.
- About one in three law students entered law school immediately upon completion of their undergraduate degrees. For 16% of respondents, more than 5 years elapsed between college and law school.
- More than two in three law students (68%) devoted no time during the week to caring for family or dependents.
- Only 3% of respondents were transfer students.

Respondents to the LSSSE survey closely resembled the national profile in terms of gender, race and ethnicity.

Table 1

Respondent Characteristics

	Respondents	LSSSE 2005-6 Student Population	All ABA-accredited law schools
Male	48%	48%	52%
Female	52%	52%	48%
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>			
American Indian/Native American	1%	1%	1%
Asian American/Pacific Islander	7%	8%	8%
Black/African American	5%	5%	6%
Hispanic/Latino	5%	6%	5%
White	77%	77%	80%
Other	5%	3%	-

Note: ABA and LSSSE categories for sex, race and ethnicity differ.

Source: LSSSE 2006 school data are from institution population files or the ABA-LSAC Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools 2006. National data are from the ABA Section on Legal Education Enrollment Statistics 2005-06.





# Influence of Faculty and Peers

## Interacting with Professors

Professors are important role models. The nature of the student-faculty relationship affects students’ perceptions of the degree to which they have developed a sense of professional ethics, how much they study, and their overall satisfaction with law school.

- Students who perceived their professors to be available, helpful and sympathetic were more positive about their law school experiences.
- Student-faculty interaction was more strongly related to students’ self-reported gains in analytical ability than time spent studying, cocurricular activities, or even the amount of academic effort they put forth.<sup>1</sup>

## Developing Ethics

In terms of developing a sense of professional ethics (defined as developing a personal code of values and ethics and contributing to the welfare of the community), the single most influential activity was student-faculty interaction. This includes talking about assignments, discussing ideas outside of class, email exchanges, and getting prompt feedback. In fact, student-faculty contact was more important to the ethical dimensions of the practice of law than participating in such activities as pro bono work, internships, moot court, and law school organizations or the student’s area of specialization or intended practice area.

## The Power of Feedback

Students who have more opportunities to assess their own progress and refocus their studying in light of feedback tend to gain more in higher level thinking skills. That is, those students who are given an opportunity to “know what they know” also figure out what they don’t know, and respond accordingly.

- Students who received prompt feedback from faculty reported greater gains in their ability to synthesize and apply concepts and ideas.
- Students who received prompt written or oral feedback spent more time preparing for class. Only 10% of 2Ls and 3Ls who “never” received prompt feedback spent more than 15 hours per week studying and preparing for class, while approximately 25% of those who received feedback “very often” spent more than 15 hours per week studying and preparing (26% of 2Ls and 23% of 3Ls).
- Those students who more often received prompt feedback were more likely to say they worked harder than they thought they could to meet the expectations of faculty members.

**Table 2** Relationship Between Faculty Feedback and Self-Reported Substantial Gains\*

	Students who <i>never</i> received prompt feedback	Students who received prompt feedback <i>often</i>	Students who received prompt feedback <i>very often</i>
Acquiring a broad legal education	79%	93%	95%
Thinking critically and analytically	76%	92%	94%
Speaking clearly and effectively	44%	69%	79%
Learning effectively on your own	71%	85%	89%
Solving complex real-world problems	31%	58%	70%
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge or skills	41%	67%	76%
Writing clearly and effectively	55%	80%	87%
Developing legal research skills	63%	84%	89%

\*“Substantial” gains represent students responding “very much” or “quite a bit.”

## Influence of Faculty and Peers (continued)

### Interacting with Peers

Students benefit from positive, substantive interactions with other students. Although competition for grades and jobs often pits students against one another, law schools can provide opportunities for them to work together in productive, collaborative ways. Toward that end, faculty members could create assignments that ask students to discuss concepts and work on problems, because these kinds of activities foster higher levels of critical thinking and academic achievement, a greater appreciation of different viewpoints, and more positive attitudes toward the law school experience (Hess, 1998). Moreover, these experiences will prepare students for what they must be able to do effectively – practice law.

- Students who saw other students as friendly and supportive were more positive about their overall law school experience.
- They were also more likely to say that they would choose the same law school again.

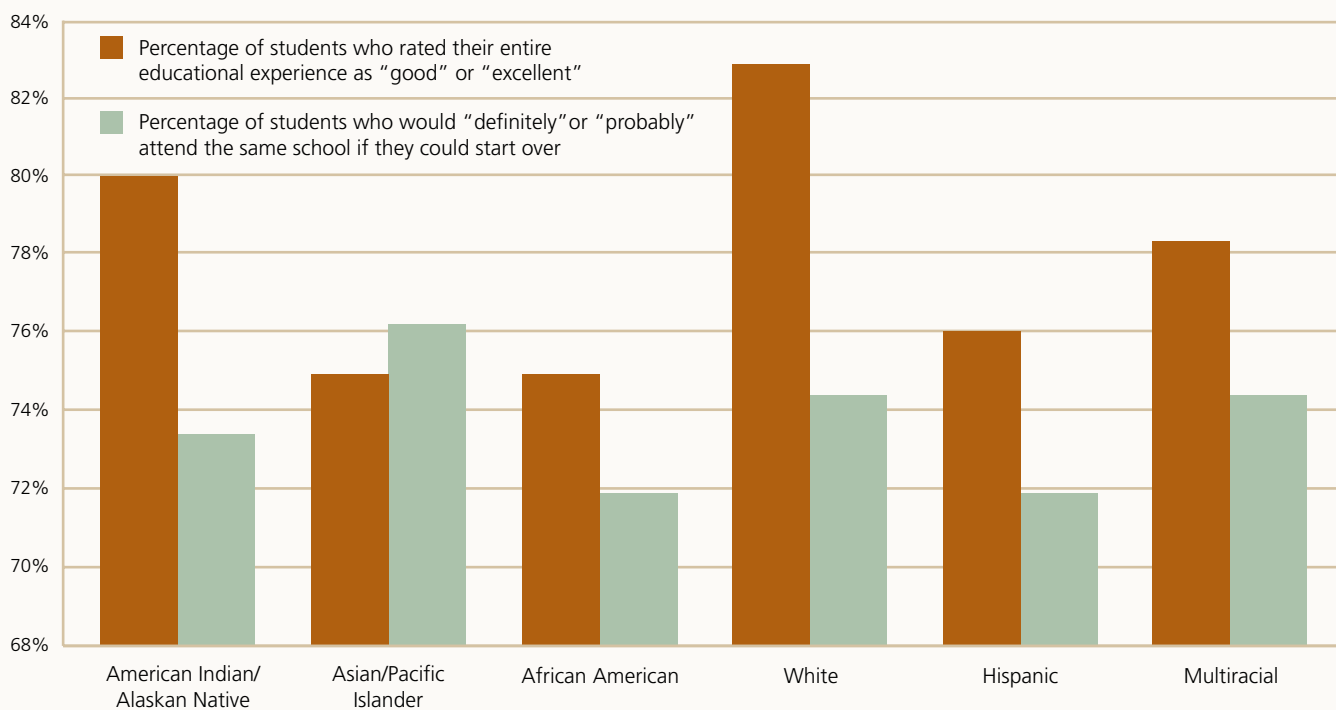
### Experiencing Diversity

Exposure to people from diverse backgrounds and who hold different perspectives enriches the learning environment and the student experience. Although students were positive about their diversity experiences in general, students did not perceive that their law school went to great lengths to facilitate such experiences.

- Nearly two thirds of students (62%) indicated that their law school placed “very little” or “some” emphasis on encouraging contact between students from different backgrounds.
- Two fifths of students reported that their legal education contributed only “some” to their understanding of people from different backgrounds; fully one third said that law school contributed “very little” to such understanding.
- Three fifths (60%) of students reported “often” or “very often” having serious conversations with students of different racial or ethnic backgrounds than their own.

Figure 3

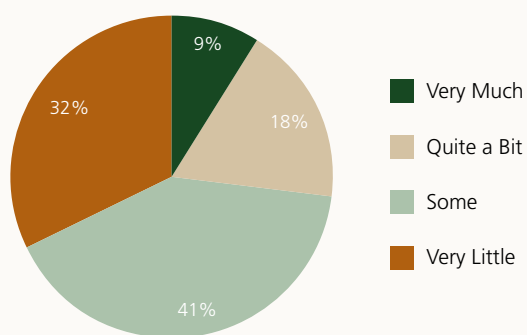
Student Satisfaction with their Educational Experiences by Race





- Two thirds of students had conversations with students with different political, religious or personal values “often” or “very often.”

**Figure 4** Student Perceptions of Degree to Which Law School Contributed to Understanding of People from Different Backgrounds



### Working Together

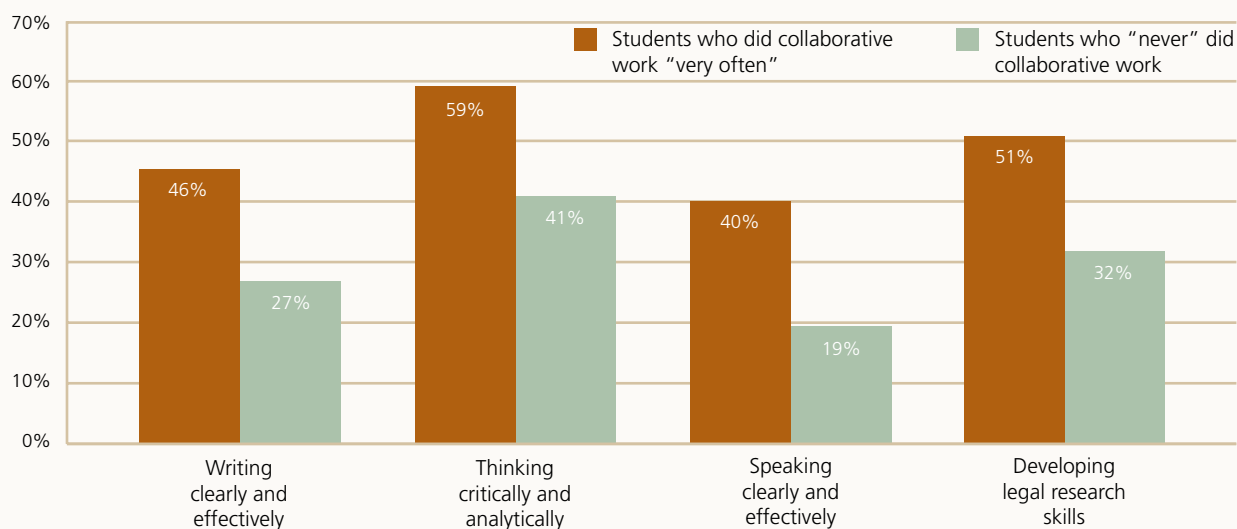
The vast majority of law students (88%) do not frequently work together with other students on projects during class. However, those students who do are more likely to report higher gains in several areas. For example, of the students who “very often” worked collaboratively, 39% felt that their legal education helped them acquire job or work-related knowledge and skills “very much.” Of those students who “never” participated in collaborative in-class work, only 18% said the same.

- Almost half (46%) of those students who did in-class collaborative work “very often” reported strong gains (“very much”) in writing skills, while only 27% of those who “never” did collaborative work reported similar gains.
- 59% of students who did collaborative work “very often” reported strong gains in critical and analytical thinking, compared to only 41% of those who “never” did collaborative work.

Students who frequently collaborated with other students on assignments and projects reported higher gains in several desirable areas.

**Figure 5**

### Collaborative In-Class Work and Self-Reported Student Gains\*



\*“Collaborative work” refers to working with other students on projects during class. This model reports percent of students responding that they gained “very much” in these areas.

# Academic Rigor

## Time on Task

The more time students spend studying, the more they learn. Law schools typically demand that students put forth a great deal of effort preparing for class. Indeed, during the challenging first year of law school, some students spend more than 30 hours per week reading and studying for class.

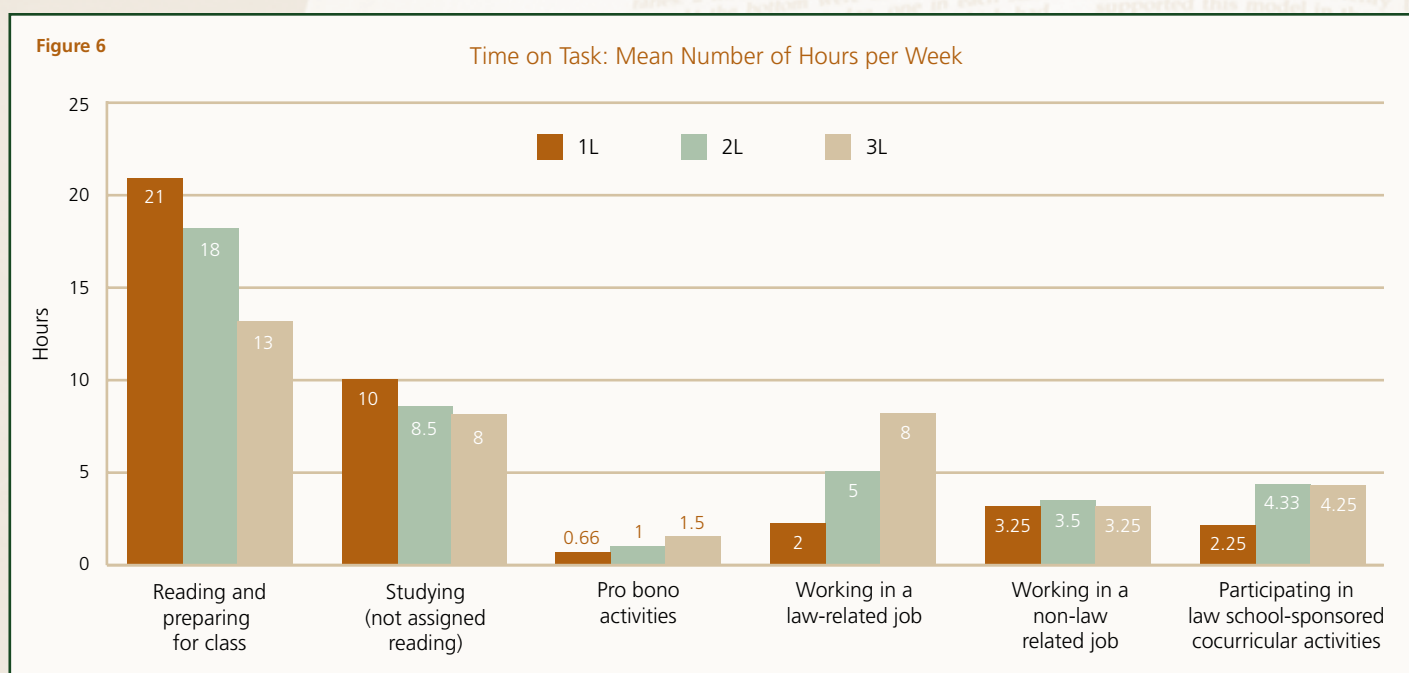
- Forty percent (40%) of 1Ls reported *never* coming to class without completing readings or assignments. Only 23% of 2Ls could say the same. By the third year, only 16% of students reported never coming to class unprepared.
- Two in three 1Ls reported they frequently prepared two or more drafts of a paper before turning it in. Over half of 3Ls (54%) frequently prepared multiple drafts. But by spring of the third year, one in five students (21%) reported never having written a paper over 20 pages in length during law school.

- A majority of law students frequently talked about course concepts outside of class. Seventy percent (70%) of 1Ls discussed ideas or concepts from their courses with others “often” or “very often.” Sixty percent (60%) of 3Ls frequently had such discussions.
- Unfortunately about four of five 3Ls (77%) reported spending no time during the week on pro-bono activities not required for class.

## Out of Class Learning Opportunities

Reading and studying are not the only avenues to effective learning. Many students benefit from applying the concepts and skills they are learning to practical problems and real-life situations lawyers face. Out-of-class opportunities can enrich and deepen law school student learning. Law schools might consider whether to actively encourage students to participate in alternative or out-of-class learning experiences in addition to their regular coursework.

A typical 1L spends about 30 hours per week reading and studying. A typical 3L spends about 20 hours.







### High Expectations: The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

Professors who expect more of their students typically get more in return. Students who felt that their law schools strongly emphasized academic rigor were more likely to spend more time reading and preparing for class, and reported greater gains in legal and higher order thinking skills (Table 4).

Similarly, those students who worked harder than they thought they could to meet the high expectations set by their professors also reported higher gains in these areas.

By communicating reasonably high expectations to students, law school faculty and administrators challenge students to perform at higher levels.

Students who worked harder than they thought they could to meet the expectations of faculty members reported higher gains in several desirable areas.

Table 3

Relationships Between Self-Reported Student Gains and High Expectations\*

	Faculty Feedback <sup>1</sup>	Worked Hard to Meet High Faculty Expectations <sup>2</sup>	School's Emphasis on Academic Rigor <sup>3</sup>
Writing clearly and effectively	.27	.26	.17
Speaking clearly and effectively	.26	.24	.15
Acquiring a broad legal education	.20	.20	.23
Developing job or work-related skills and knowledge	.25	.19	.14
Learning effectively on your own	.17	.27	.22
Developing clearer career goals	.25	.20	.12
Thinking critically and analytically	.24	.28	.23
Developing legal research skills	.24	.21	.18
Solving complex real-world problems	.26	.25	.13

\*This model reports statistically significant correlations between students' self-reported gains in these areas and law school's high expectations of students.

<sup>1</sup>Relates to survey item: "Received prompt feedback (written or oral) on your academic performance by faculty."

<sup>2</sup>Relates to survey item: "Worked harder than you thought you could to meet the expectations of a faculty member."

<sup>3</sup>Relates to survey item: "To what extent does your law school emphasize spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work?"

## Academic Rigor (continued)

### Practical Application of Skills

During the second and third years of law school, students who had a clinical internship or field experience or who did pro bono work report gaining more than other students in several desirable areas. These areas included higher order thinking skills, speaking and writing proficiency, and competence and confidence in solving complex real-world problems.

This link between effective learning and opportunities to apply concepts and skills to practical situations suggests that clinics may serve a valuable role in stimulating learning,

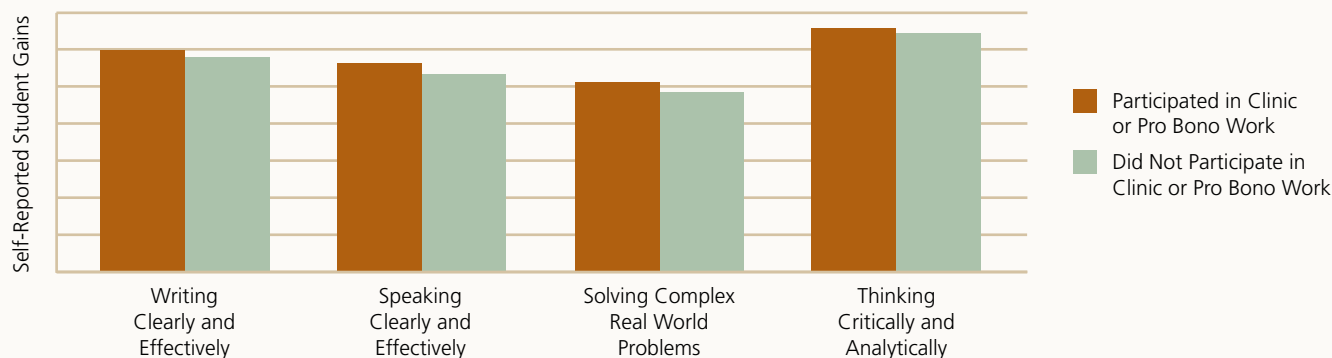
clarifying career goals, and inculcating in students a sense of professional responsibility.

Students who participated in clinical or field experiences reported greater gains in:

- Clarifying career goals
- Learning effectively on one's own
- Contributing to the welfare of the community
- Understanding people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Working effectively with others

Figure 7

Self-Reported Student Gains by Participating in Clinics and Pro Bono Activities\*



\*This model reports the mean responses from 3L students. Actual survey responses included: "very much," "quite a bit," "some," and "very little."

2Ls and 3Ls who participate in clinics or who do pro bono work report higher gains in several desirable areas.

Table 4

Percentage of Students who Participate in Clinical and Pro Bono Activities

	1L	2L	3L	4L
Clinical internship or field experience	85%*	36%	64%	43%
Volunteer or pro bono work	20%	42%	56%	35%
Devote some time during the week to legal pro bono work <i>not</i> required for class or clinic	16%	21%	23%	14%

\*Results for 1L respondents in this area report those who have done or *plan to do* the activity since most 1Ls have not had the opportunity to participate in these activities.

Results for all other respondents (2L, 3L and 4L) report the percentage of students who *have done* the activity.





## The Learning Environment

The nature of the learning environment is a non-trivial factor in shaping the law student experience. Students sometimes decide where to attend law school based on the espoused philosophy and “feel” of a particular school. A supportive and open climate might encourage students to participate in class and approach their professors, while a highly competitive climate may stifle such behavior.

A majority of law students report that their schools are friendly, open and supportive. For example, more than half of all students (56%) agreed very strongly that their relationships with other students were “friendly and supportive.” Only 4% indicated strongly that their peers were unsupportive. Most students also report positive relationships with faculty and administrators. Do such results indicate the *The Paperchase* and *One L* are no longer representative of the law school experience?

- More than half (56%) of all students strongly agreed that other students were friendly, helpful, and that their relationships were infused with a sense of belonging.
- Forty-five percent (45%) of all students strongly agreed that their professors were available, helpful and sympathetic.
- More than a third (39%) of all students strongly agreed that administrators were helpful, considerate and flexible.

Students’ willingness to participate in class and approach professors was not related to race or ethnicity. Students of color generally found their peers, professors and administrators open, supportive and helpful.

- Students of color were just as likely as White students to ask questions in class.
- Students of color were just as likely to talk with professors about assignments, ideas or concepts, or career plans.
- Students of color received feedback from professors just as often as White students.

### Career Services

Student dissatisfaction with job search help and career counseling increases as does the amount of law school debt. “Career services” represents the combination of satisfaction with job search help, career counseling, and school support for success in the employment search. Third year students were the least satisfied with career services, and second years were less satisfied than first years.

### Outside the Classroom

Women and students of color were more likely to join and hold leadership positions in school-sponsored organizations. Women and students of color were just as likely as their male and White counterparts to participate in moot court. However, Black students were slightly underrepresented on law journals (10% participation versus 15% for Hispanic and Native American, 18% for multiracial, and 22% for Asian and White students).

Student dissatisfaction with job search help and career counseling increases as does the amount of law school debt.





## Using LSSSE Data

LSSSE data are especially valuable because the findings can be used almost immediately to improve the law school experience. This section illustrates how selected law schools across the country are translating their data to action.

### Making Institutional Improvement a School-Wide Goal

A first step in using the LSSSE data is to understand what the findings mean and generate interest in the results. By talking to students and faculty about how the results can be used for institutional assessment and improvement, administrators can stimulate school-wide discussions. Developing a strategy for dissemination of the LSSSE results will help channel the information directly to people who can use it. At the **University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law**, all faculty members received copies of the school's report. Additionally, the LSSSE findings were presented to the faculty prompting productive discussion about the school's philosophy and environment. Similarly, **Washington and Lee University School of Law** reviewed its findings during faculty development sessions. At **Southwestern University School of Law**, Dean Bryant Garth presented the LSSSE findings to the faculty, concentrating on issues particular to Southwestern's urban setting.

### Linking LSSSE to Other Sources of Data

Schools can supplement LSSSE findings by connecting other sources of information about teaching, learning, and the student experience, asking such context-specific questions on internal surveys. **Indiana University School of Law – Bloomington** administered both LSSSE and a local student survey that highlighted several issues related specifically to Indiana's programs and policies, while the LSSSE survey provided valuable comparative information. Administrators at **Oklahoma City University School of Law** developed an alumni survey to use in concert with the LSSSE survey, giving them a fuller picture of the student experience during the law school years and beyond.

### Incorporating LSSSE into the Accreditation Process

Many schools intend to use their results in accreditation self-studies. The survey questions correspond to many of the ABA accreditation standards. With three years of LSSSE data


in hand, **Indiana University School of Law – Bloomington** is conducting a longitudinal analysis of its results. Already, LSSSE data have helped shape curricular and programmatic innovations, and will be incorporated into the IU-Bloomington self-study for reaccreditation. **Franklin Pierce Law Center** included student engagement results in their site inspection report for regional accreditation. Their results helped to describe the student experience and identify areas of strength and relative weakness. **Drake University Law School**, **University of Missouri – Columbia School of Law**, and **Oklahoma City University School of Law** are among other schools using LSSSE data in the accreditation self-study process. The new Accreditation Toolkit provides guidance to schools wishing to use LSSSE results in their own self-studies. To download a copy, visit the LSSSE web site.

### Taking the Results Further

Many deans and administrators have found it useful to team up with institutional researchers to take the results further. Institutional research offices, whether housed within the law school or in the university at large, serve as a valuable resource for schools looking to identify sub-populations or perform extensive statistical analysis. **Brigham Young University Clark Law School**, **New York Law School**, **Pepperdine University School of Law**, **St. John's University School of Law**, **South Texas College of Law**, and the **University of Windsor, Faculty of Law** are among the schools that have drawn on institutional research resources.

After reviewing the results, those working with the data might find that particular questions or issues merit further exploration. Many schools have contacted LSSSE for assistance in conducting special analysis. For example, **Ohio Northern University Pettit College of Law** is interested in comparing first year and third year students at their school to students nationally. ONU worked with LSSSE staff to conduct this analysis. **New York Law School** and **Indiana University School of Law – Bloomington** have also taken advantage of LSSSE's ability to conduct special analyses.





## Formulating a Strategic Action Plan

Findings from the LSSSE study gave campus administrators at **St. John's University School of Law** a picture of how law students were studying and learning. After sharing their results with student leaders, administrators developed an action plan for addressing areas of student concern. In addition, St. John's incorporated LSSSE results into a university-wide study on professional programs. **Ohio Northern University Pettit College of Law** is using the broad university assessment plan to give context to their LSSSE results. By tracking student engagement results, administrators at the law school will be able to measure how well law students are attaining the university's articulated goals for learning. ONU is tracking several years' worth of LSSSE data in order to gain an accurate picture of the law student experience, and to track improvements over time. At **Brigham Young University Clark School of Law**, administrators used their LSSSE results to develop an orientation program that set high standards for entering students.

## Identifying Peer Law Schools

Internal evaluation is important, but sometimes perspective is best gained through comparison with similar institutions. New in 2006, participating schools had the opportunity to form a consortium with other schools. Past consortium participants include **Florida Coastal School of Law**, **New York Law School**, **Nova Southeastern Law Center**, **Phoenix International School of Law**, **St. Thomas University School of Law**, and **Thomas Jefferson School of Law**. Schools are taking advantage of this option to examine specific themes or areas of concern. For example, schools with sizeable part-time populations could examine issues pertinent to their particular needs. Similarly, urban schools, schools with a particular curricular focus (such as environmental law), or highly selective schools may find the consortium option useful.

## Public Disclosure Policy

*LSSSE encourages public disclosure of student engagement results in ways that serve to increase understanding of law school quality and that support efforts to improve law school teaching and student learning.*

Disclosing law school results from the LSSSE survey provides an opportunity to help educate the public about the value of student engagement as a new metric for defining and examining law school quality. LSSSE especially supports public reporting of student engagement results in ways that enable thoughtful, responsible comparisons while encouraging and celebrating institutional diversity.


*Whether a participating law school makes public its student engagement results is up to the institution.*

Consistent with the LSSSE participation agreement, LSSSE does not make institutional results available to third parties. Law schools may do so as stated in the LSSSE Participation Agreement. While organizations and individuals are entitled to request LSSSE data from participating schools, LSSSE is neutral as to whether institutions supply their results. Premature disclosure of an individual school's results could inadvertently divert the focus away from improvement if the data are used in inappropriate or irresponsible ways.

*LSSSE does not support the use of publicly disclosing student engagement results for the purpose of rankings.*

The LSSSE Advisory Board and LSSSE cosponsors – the Association of American Law Schools and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching – believe reducing student engagement to a single indicator obscures complex dimensions of law school performance. Rankings are inherently flawed as a tool for accountability and improvement, regardless of the information on which they are based. Such comparisons become even more problematic in the case of law schools that differ in terms of mission, resources and profile of students.

**"In short, [LSSSE is] a powerful tool." –Dean Richard Matasar, New York Law School**



## Looking Forward

With several national administrations of LSSSE behind us, we are excited about the future prospects of the survey. More and more schools are discovering the value of student engagement data. With increasing interest in measuring the quality of legal education, we look forward to working with schools and researchers to make the data even more useful and to discover new, productive ways to put the findings to use. We will continue to work with our partners, including a team of innovative thinkers from the Indiana University faculty, each of whom is committed to improving the quality of legal education by focusing on the student experience.

we best impart a sense of professionalism on our students? How effective are traditional courses in legal ethics? Information on the student experience can help us better understand these issues, and in time, we can take intentional, well-considered steps to help our students learn better during law school. We look forward to working with law school leaders who are committed to moving beyond the status quo by using effective educational practices to improve the quality of legal education.

***“LSSSE cannot improve legal education, but thoughtful legal educators, armed with the data from LSSSE, can.” –Professor Gerald Hess, Gonzaga University School of Law, Visiting Professor, Phoenix International School of Law***

To make the survey more valuable to schools, we created an Accreditation Toolkit (available on the LSSSE website) that will help administrators map the LSSSE results directly to accreditation standards. LSSSE also now makes it possible for schools to join a consortium of six or more schools. Consortium schools can tailor the survey instrument by posing up to twenty additional questions that might explore a particular theme (e.g. technology in the classroom) or address a particular issue of interest to all consortium participants (e.g. student experiences at urban law schools). Asking consortium-specific questions promises to be especially valuable for strategic planning or program evaluation purposes.

LSSSE data also can be used by law school faculty and staff to craft solutions to some of the enduring challenges of legal education. For example, how can we encourage and facilitate more interaction between students and professors? How can

### Research Note

<sup>1</sup>Controlling for LSAT scores, grades, gender and racial or ethnic background, we performed separate regression analyses for each class, 1L-3L. We tested for the effects of several clusters of engagement activities on student-reported gains in critical and analytic thinking and ability to solve complex real world problems. These clusters included: (1) student faculty interaction, including discussing ideas, assignments or other plans with faculty members, feedback, and other work with faculty; (2) academic effort, including coming to class prepared, working harder than you thought you could, writing assignments, number of drafts prepared for papers; (3) time spent studying, including reading for class and preparing for class; and (4) cocurricular activities, including moot court, internships, school organizations. Student-faculty interaction had the largest effect on gains in analytic skills followed by student academic effort.

***“We received extraordinarily valuable feedback about our students, our teaching and our services from participating in LSSSE. It gave us a way to measure and hold ourselves accountable for improving student learning.”***

***–Professor Sophie Sparrow, Franklin Pierce Law Center***



# Supporting Materials

## Supporting Materials on the LSSSE Website

For more detailed information on the 2006 Annual Survey, please visit LSSSE's Web site at: [www.lssse.iub.edu](http://www.lssse.iub.edu)

- Copy of the LSSSE survey instrument
- Profiles of all participating law schools
- Frequency reports of student responses presented by class year with comparisons based on school size, school affiliation, and all participating LSSSE law schools
- Presentations from national conferences and campus workshops
- Registration information for LSSSE 2007 administration
- Accreditation Toolkit

## Resources

Association of American Law Schools, *Statement on Diversity, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action*, AALS HANDBOOK: STATEMENTS OF GOOD PRACTICES, available at: [http://aals.org/about\\_handbook\\_sgp\\_div.php](http://aals.org/about_handbook_sgp_div.php) (last visited October 10, 2006).

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David Dominguez, *Principle 2: Good Practice Encourages Cooperation Among Students*, 49 J. LEGAL EDUC. 386 (1999).

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George D. Kuh, Jillian Kinzie, John H. Schuh, Elizabeth J. Whitt, and Associates, *STUDENT SUCCESS IN COLLEGE: CREATING CONDITIONS THAT MATTER* (2005).

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George D. Kuh, *Assessing What Really Matters to Student Learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement*, 33 CHANGE 3, at 10.

George D. Kuh & Ernest T. Pascarella, *What Does Institutional Selectivity Tell Us About Educational Quality?*, 36 CHANGE 5, at 52.

Law School Survey of Student Engagement, *STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LAW SCHOOLS: A FIRST LOOK*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research (2005).

Law School Survey of Student Engagement, *STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LAW SCHOOLS: THE LAW SCHOOL YEARS*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research (2006).

Terri LeClercq, *Principle 4: Good Practice Gives Prompt Feedback*, 49 J. LEGAL EDUC. 418 (1999).

Paula Lustbader, *Principle 7: Good Practice Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning*, 49 J. LEGAL EDUC. 448 (1999).

MARCIA BAXTER MAGOLDA, *CREATING CONTEXTS FOR LEARNING AND SELF-AUTHORSHIP* (1999).

The NALP Foundation & American Bar Foundation, *AFTER THE JD – FIRST RESULTS OF A NATIONAL STUDY OF LEGAL CAREERS* (2004).

National Survey of Student Engagement, *STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: EXPLORING DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research (2005).

Patrick T. O'Day & George D. Kuh, *What Matters in Law School: Insights from the Law School Survey of Student Engagement*, forthcoming, 81 IND. L.J. 401 (2006).

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Ernest T. Pascarella & Patrick T. Terenzini, *HOW COLLEGE AFFECTS STUDENTS: A THIRD DECADE OF RESEARCH, VOLUME 2* (2005).

Robert A. Scott & Dorothy Echols Tobe, *Communicating High Expectations*, 81 Liberal Education 2 (1998).

Lee S. Shulman, *Making Differences: a Table of Learning*, 34 CHANGE 6, at 36.

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# Survey Instrument

The LSSE survey is administered entirely online. In addition to the questions listed below, respondents can submit additional written comments at the end of the survey.

## Law School Survey of Student Engagement 2006

Please mark your answers in the boxes. Examples: ☐ or ☐ In the larger boxes, please print your responses.

1. In your experience at your law school during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, sexual orientations, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Came to class without completing readings or assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Worked with other students on projects during class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work.

Very little	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very much
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. During the current school year, about how much writing will you do?

	10 or more	7-9	4-6	1-3	0
a. Number of written papers of 20 pages or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Number of written papers between 5 and 19 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Number of written papers of fewer than 5 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do at your law school before you graduate? (Mark only one response for each item.)

	Done	Plan to do	Do not plan to do	Un-decided
a. Clinical internship or field experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Volunteer or pro bono work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Student-faculty committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Work on a legal research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Study abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Law journal member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Moot court team member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Law student organization member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Law student organization leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. In your experience at your law school, how satisfied are you with each of these areas?

	Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Not used
a. Academic advising and planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Career counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Personal counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Job search help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Financial aid advising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Library assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Computing technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. During the current school year, about how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

	More than 35	31-35	26-30	21-25	16-20	11-15	6-10	1-5	0
a. Reading assigned textbooks, online class reading, and other course materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Preparing for class and clinical courses other than reading (studying, writing, doing homework, trial preparation, and other academic activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Reading on your own (not assigned) for personal or academic enrichment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Legal pro bono work not required for a class or clinical course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Working for pay in a law-related job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Working for pay in a nonlegal job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Participating in law school-sponsored activities (organizations, journal, moot court, student bar association, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Exercising or participating in fitness activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Participating in community organizations (politics, religious groups, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**8 To what extent does your law school emphasize each of the following?**

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Encouraging the ethical practice of the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, sexual orientation, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Providing the support you need to succeed in your employment search	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural events, symposia, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Providing the financial counseling you need to afford your education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Using computers in academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**9 Mark the box that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your law school.**

Relationships with:		
a. Other students	b. Faculty members	c. Administrative staff and officials
Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging	Available, helpful, sympathetic	Helpful, considerate, flexible
7 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
6 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
5 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
4 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation	Unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic	Unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid

**10 To what extent has your experience at your law school contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?**

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Acquiring a broad legal education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Writing clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Thinking critically and analytically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Using computing and information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Developing legal research skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Working effectively with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Learning effectively on your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Understanding yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Solving complex real-world problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Developing clearer career goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Contributing to the welfare of your community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11 How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at your law school?**

☐ Excellent  
☐ Good  
☐ Fair  
☐ Poor

**12 If you could start over again, would you go to the same law school you are now attending?**

☐ Definitely yes  
☐ Probably yes  
☐ Probably no  
☐ Definitely no

**13 Write in the year of your birth:** 1 9

**14 Your sex:** ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Transgender

**15 Are you an international student or foreign national?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

**16 What is your racial or ethnic identification? (Mark only one.)**

☐ American Indian or other Native American  
☐ Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander  
☐ Black or African American  
☐ White (not Hispanic)  
☐ Mexican or Mexican American  
☐ Puerto Rican  
☐ Other Hispanic or Latino  
☐ Multiracial  
☐ Other  
☐ I prefer not to respond

**17 What is your sexual orientation?**

☐ Bisexual  
☐ Gay or lesbian  
☐ I prefer not to respond

**18 Write in the number of credit hours in which you enrolled during the current academic year.**

a. Fall 2005 semester:    credits  
 b. Spring 2006 semester:    credits

**19 Thinking about the current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment?**

a. ☐ Full-time ☐ Less than full-time  
 b. ☐ Day division ☐ Evening division

**20 Are you participating in a joint-degree program?**

☐ No  
☐ Yes. Specify which program:  
☐ J.D./LL.M. ☐ J.D./M.P.A.  
☐ J.D./M.B.A. ☐ J.D./M.P.P.  
☐ Other:   

**21 What is your current classification in your JD program?**

☐ 1L ☐ 2L ☐ 3L ☐ 4L  
☐ Other, specify:   

**22 Did you begin law school at your current institution or elsewhere?**

☐ Started here ☐ Started elsewhere

**23 How many years elapsed between earning your undergraduate degree and enrolling in law school?**

☐ 0 ☐ 3-5 ☐ More than 10  
☐ 1-2 ☐ 6-10

**24 What have most of your grades been up to now at this law school?**

☐ A ☐ B+ ☐ C+  
☐ A- ☐ B ☐ C  
☐ B- ☐ C- or lower

**25 How much educational debt from attending law school do you expect to have upon your graduation?**

☐ \$0  
☐ \$1 - \$20,000  
☐ \$20,001 - \$40,000  
☐ \$40,001 - \$60,000  
☐ \$60,001 - \$80,000  
☐ \$80,001 - \$100,000  
☐ \$100,001 - \$120,000  
☐ More than \$120,000

## THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR VIEWS!

Questions or comments? Contact Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSEE), Indiana University, Center for Postsecondary Research, Eggermann Hall, Suite 415, 1000 East Tenth Street, Bloomington, Indiana, 47406-7512 or lssee@indiana.edu or www.lssee.indiana.edu/lssee. Copyright © 2006 Indiana University

**25 Which field best describes your area(s) of legal specialization or expected area(s) of specialization? (Mark only one in each column.)**

Primary specialty	Secondary specialty (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative dispute resolution
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Civil rights
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Constitutional
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate and securities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Criminal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment and labor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and natural resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Family and juvenile
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> General practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Immigration
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> International
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Litigation and trial
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Military
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Nonlegal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Patent and intellectual property
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Real estate
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tax
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Trusts and estates
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Undecided
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify: <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">  </span>

**26 Which setting(s) best describe(s) (1) your PREFERRED work environment, and (2) your EXPECTED work environment once you graduate from law school? (Mark only one in each column.)**

(1) Preferred setting	(2) Expected setting
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic (professor, education agency)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting firm
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Business and industry (corporate counsel)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Government agency (federal, state)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Judicial clerkship
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Legislative office
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Military
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Nonlegal organization
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Private firm - small (fewer than 10 attorneys)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Private firm - medium (10-50 attorneys)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Private firm - large (more than 50 attorneys)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Prosecutor's office
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Public defender's office
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Public interest group
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Solo practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify: <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">  </span>

**27 What was your LSAT score?**   

**28 What was your undergraduate grade point average?**



## Participating Law Schools: 2006

The Catholic University of America  
The Columbus School of Law  
Washington, D.C.

Charleston School of Law  
Charleston, SC

City University of New York  
School of Law at Queens College  
Flushing, NY

Drake University Law School  
Des Moines, IA

Duke University School of Law  
Durham, NC

Emory University School of Law  
Atlanta, GA

Florida Coastal School of Law  
Jacksonville, FL

Franklin Pierce Law Center  
Concord, NH

The George Washington University  
Law School  
Washington, DC

Golden Gate University School of Law  
San Francisco, CA

Gonzaga University School of Law  
Spokane, WA

Hofstra University School of Law  
Hempstead, NY

Indiana University School of Law –  
Bloomington  
Bloomington, IN

Lewis and Clark Law School  
Portland, OR

Loyola University School of Law, Chicago  
Chicago, IL

Mercer University,  
Walter F. George School of Law  
Macon, GA

Michigan State University  
College of Law  
East Lansing, MI

New York Law School  
New York, NY

Northeastern University School of Law  
Boston, MA

Nova Southeastern University  
Shepard Broad Law Center  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Ohio Northern University  
Pettit College of Law  
Ada, OH

Oklahoma City University School of Law  
Oklahoma City, OK

Osgoode Hall Law School of York University  
Toronto, ON

Pace University School of Law  
White Plains, NY

Pepperdine University School of Law  
Malibu, CA

Phoenix International School of Law  
Scottsdale, AZ

Queen's University Faculty of Law  
Kingston, ON

Roger Williams University,  
Ralph R. Papitto School of Law  
Bristol, RI

Samford University,  
Cumberland School of Law  
Birmingham, AL

Santa Clara University School of Law  
Santa Clara, CA

Seattle University School of Law  
Seattle, WA

Seton Hall University School of Law  
Newark, NJ

South Texas College of Law  
Houston, TX

Southwestern University School of Law  
Los Angeles, CA

St. Thomas University School of Law  
Miami, FL

Stetson University College of Law  
Gulfport, FL

Syracuse University College of Law  
Syracuse, NY

Suffolk University Law School  
Boston, MA

Texas Wesleyan University School of Law  
Fort Worth, TX

The University of Akron School of Law  
Akron, OH

The University of Oklahoma Law Center  
Norman, OK

Thomas Jefferson School of Law  
San Diego, CA

Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center  
Huntington, NY

University of Arkansas at Little Rock  
School of Law  
Little Rock, AR

University of British Columbia Faculty of Law  
Vancouver, BC

University of California at Davis  
School of Law  
Davis, CA

University of California at Los Angeles  
School of Law  
Los Angeles, CA

University of Cincinnati College of Law  
Cincinnati, OH

University of Dayton School of Law  
Dayton, OH

University of Detroit Mercy School of Law  
Detroit, MI

University of Houston Law Center  
Houston, TX

University of Idaho College of Law  
Moscow, ID

University of Miami School of Law  
Coral Gables, FL

University of Missouri – Kansas City School  
of Law  
Kansas City, MO

University of Nebraska College of Law  
Lincoln, NE

University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
School of Law  
Las Vegas, NV

University of New Brunswick Faculty of Law  
Fredericton, NB

University of San Francisco School of Law  
San Francisco, CA

University of South Carolina School of Law  
Columbia, SC

University of Southern California  
Gould School of Law  
Los Angeles, CA

University of St. Thomas School of Law  
Minneapolis, MN

University of Windsor Faculty of Law  
Windsor, ON

Vanderbilt University Law School  
Nashville, TN

Washburn University School of Law  
Topeka, KS



# Law School Survey of Student Engagement

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